DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 144 476 HE 009 264

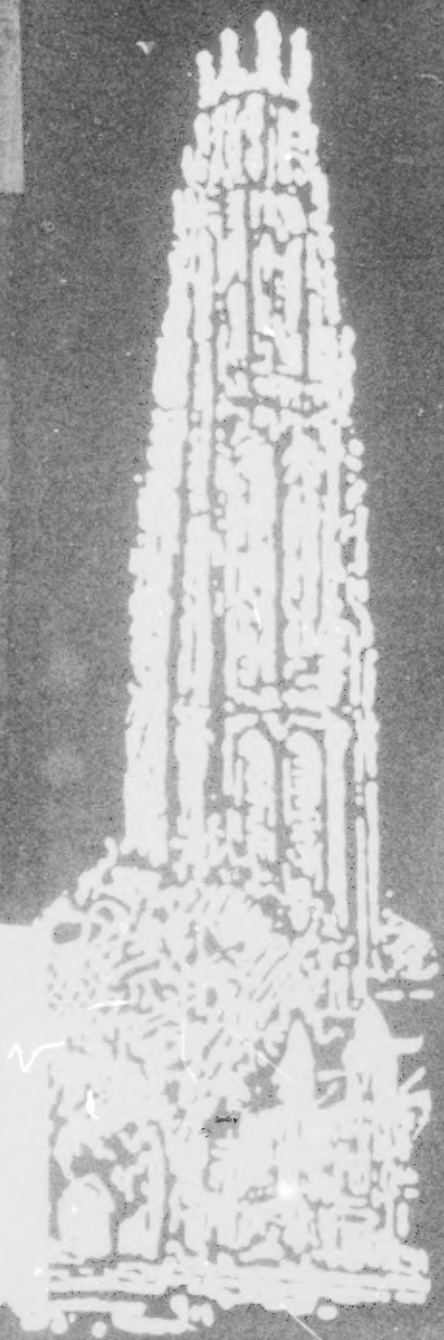
AUTHOR	Giles, Geoffrey J.
TITLE	The Structure of Higher Education in the German Democratic Republic. Yale Higher Education Program Working Paper.
INSTITUTION	Yale Univ., New Haven, Conn. Inst. for Social and Policy Studies.
SPONS AGENCY	Lilly Endowment, Inc., Indianapolis, Ind.
REPORT NO	YHEP-12
PUB DATE	Oct 76
NOTE	43p.; Best copy available
AVAILABLE FROM	Yale University, Institution for Social and Policy Studies, 16A Yale Station (111 Prospect Street), New Haven, Connecticut 06520
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrative Organization; Colleges; College Students; *Comparative Education; Comparative Statistics; *Educational Supply; *Foreign Countries; Governance; *Higher Education; Manpower Development; *Political Influences; Universities
IDENTIFIERS	*East Germany

ABSTRACT

Postsecondary education in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) is largely the domain of the Ministry of Higher and Technical Education, which is responsible both for higher education and for training carried out in the lower- level technical, engineering, and vocational schools. This paper covers the higher education sector, which has been a major concern to the regime since the end of World War II. The priorities and administrative organization of the colleges and universities are described, with emphasis on political ramifications. Statistical tables are included on student characteristics. (LBH)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED144476



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

Institution for
Social and Policy Studies

YALE UNIVERSITY
New Haven, Conn. 06520

THE STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

by

Geoffrey J. Giles*

YALE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM
WORKING PAPER

YHEP-12

October 1976

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

*Geoffrey J. Giles
Research Associate, Program
of Comparative and Historical
Studies of Higher Education

The research reported in this paper has been part of the Yale Higher Education Program. It has been supported by research funds from the Lilly Endowment for the comparative study of academic organization and governance.

In the interest of fullest possible circulation of information and ideas, the Institution for Social and Policy Studies reproduces and distributes these Working Papers at the request of authors who are affiliated with the ISPS. They are not edited or reviewed, and the views in them are those of their authors.

Content of this Working Paper is not for publication or for quotation without permission. A list of the Working Papers of the Program may be obtained from the address below.

Program of Comparative and Historical
Studies of Higher Education
Institution for Social and Policy Studies
Yale University
1732 Yale Station
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

THE STRUCTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

I

Today the German Democratic Republic (GDR) has become one of the leading industrial nations in the world, and the primary economic partner of the Soviet Union within the Communist bloc. Its success is due in no small part to its ability to produce a large, highly-trained technical elite through a sophisticated education system closely tailored to the needs of the society and the economy.

Post-secondary education in the GDR is largely the domain of the Ministry of Higher and Technical Education (Ministerium für Hoch- und Fachschulwesen - MHF), which is responsible both for higher education and for training carried out in the lower-level technical, engineering and vocational schools (Fachschulen), of which there are some two hundred. This paper is concerned solely with the higher education sector, divided into universities and colleges (Universitäten und Hochschulen) between which, however, there is little distinction in prestige or rank, so that the terms may be used for the GDR almost interchangeably. A college generally offers a narrower range of specialisms than the broad canvas of sciences available in the universities. Altogether there are some 65 colleges, of which only eight bear the title of Universität (including the Technische Universität at Dresden).

Higher education has been a major concern to the regime since the end of the Second World War. The purges of lecturers with National Socialist affiliations or leanings were far more drastic than in the universities of the Western Zones of Germany (for example, only 52 remained out of 222 faculty members at Leipzig University), so that the authorities were faced with almost a completely fresh start in the education sector. Politically, this was precisely what they wanted, but in all other respects, the concomitant problems of inexperience were sorely felt.

As might be expected, the Soviet Military Administration set a high premium on political reliability, or preferably ideological enthusiasm. It should have come as no great surprise to learn that this did not always or necessarily go hand in hand with academic excellence or technical expertise. This had been precisely the experience of the National Socialists in the previous regime.[1] The problem remains to the present day, and there have been alternating phases of stern insistence on displays of communist orthodoxy, and laissez-faire favouritism towards academics in the hope of wooing their voluntary support. The view has frequently prevailed among the political leadership that the technical intelligentsia,with or without a passionate engagement in the political life of the community, is essential to the economic growth of the GDR. Therefore, provided the members of this academic elite do not actively show dissent or challenge the supremacy of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED) with revisionist critiques, they should be allowed to go their own uninvolved, sometimes apolitical, way.

During the winter of 1945/46, however, when the universities re-opened, these considerations did not prevail, as the new regime sought to sweep away the previous twelve years' experience with the retributive harshness of the long-suffering underdog at last able to flex his muscles. This is known as the First University Reform. After the cleansing of the faculty, its other major concern was to break down the monopoly of the bourgeoisie over higher education by an influx of peasant and working-class students. Since these latter were not in possession of the Abitur, nor intellectually prepared to benefit from university study, they were hurried through preparatory crash-courses, which the universities themselves provided by the end of 1947. They were formally integrated as "Workers' and Peasants' Faculties" in 1949.

---

[1] Even the Nazis themselves were often obliged to admit in private that their political leaders at the university were no great scholars. Geoffrey Giles, The National Socialist Students' Association in Hamburg 1926-1945, Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University 1975, p. 223 ff.

Through positive discrimination in the awarding of university places, working-class students accounted for 28% of the student body by the year 1949/50, a remarkable increase over the 1% - 3% they had always represented in the past.[2]

After the War, responsibility for higher education devolved from the Allied Military Governments to the individual federal Länder, which had always controlled education until the National Socialists set up a Reich Ministry of Education in 1934. In practice, this resulted in a good measure of local autonomy on the part of universities in their internal affairs. The abandonment of hopes of a swift reunification with the creation in 1949 of separate East and West German states freed the communist government of the desirability of running parallel with the Western Zones in its administrative practice, and a Soviet-inspired movement towards central control was introduced.

The Second University Reform, initiated by the Central Committee of the SED in 1951 in conjunction with the Third Party Conference, dealt with organisational and structural matters in contrast with the previous one, where the emphasis had lain on the renewal of personnel.[3] In the first place, responsibility for higher education was removed entirely from the Länder and vested in a State Secretariat for Higher Education in Berlin, entirely separate from the Ministry of Education. The most drastic changes, departing from the traditional German style, were the introduction of set courses and a fixed period of study on the Soviet model, together with the extension of the seven-month academic year to ten months. All students were now obliged to study Russian, and to undertake three years' study of Marxism-Leninism. Moreover,

---

[2] Erwin Schwertner & Arwed Kempke, Zur Wissenschafts- und Hochschulpolitik der SED 1945/6-1966, East Berlin 1967, p. 25.

[3] Verordnung über die Neuorganisation des Hochschulwesens vom 22. Februar 1951, reprinted in: Siegfried Baske & Martha Engelbert, Zwei Jahrzehnte Bildungspolitik in der Sowjetzone Deutschlands - Dokumente, W. Berlin 1966, Vol. I, p. 180 ff.

membership in the communist youth organisation, the Free German Youth (FDJ), was henceforth required, since FDJ functionaries were to monitor each student's academic progress in a tutorial capacity.

It was a time of increasing concern with the intelligentsia, notably on the part of the SED's Central Committee, which was anxious to retain the loyalties of academics in the face of the Party's increasingly irritable demands for ideological strictness, greater scientific output and more efficient teaching. And so, whilst nagging them to accomplish the "socialisation" of the university (i.e. tying their work more closely to the requirements of the state, both in teaching the students to become dependable socialists, and in research), the Politburo decided in the summer of 1952 to raise professors' salaries by 100%, and those of lecturers by 50%. The university question was held to be of sufficient importance for a permanent department relating to higher education and the sciences to be set up within the secretariat of the Party's Central Committee.

General trends towards "stalinisation" in many areas of the life of the GDR were halted by the Soviet leader's death in March 1953, and, if not wholly reversed, at least tempered by the "New Course" of the Party, which sought to propel the professors forward with the more gentle breath of moderation. And although the goal of these balmy zephyrs, the creation of an atmosphere of general complacency, was largely realised, it also gave rise to gusts of criticism which some now felt emboldened to generate. The necessity for compulsory Russian studies was not universally accepted and there was widespread discontent with the dilettante nature of many of the courses on Marxism-Leninism at this time. The intervention of Soviet troops in Hungary in 1956 actually provoked appeals for mass demonstrations of protest in the GDR. These, however, were prevented with some firmness, for the wind had now changed.

West Germany had joined NATO in 1955, and the GDR had become a member of the Warsaw Pact, founded in the same year. The race was on to outstrip the West in industrial production, in which task science and technology had to be tightly harnessed to produce the East German "economic miracle". They were proclaimed more insistently than ever as "a decisive factor in the struggle between socialism and capitalism in Germany".[4] To facilitate the more effective co-ordination of research projects, the German Academy of Sciences underwent a re-organisation in the Spring of 1957, gathering some forty institutes under the jurisdictional umbrella of a single steering committee. Shortly afterwards, the Research Council of the GDR was created in August 1957 to direct research priorities, and attached not to the State Secretariat, but to the Council of Ministers.[5] Yet no immediate and startling change in the pace of scholarly advance was apparent to the political leaders, and the following year saw them as impatient as ever. The goodwill of academics in accepting numbers of research tasks was ungratefully criticised: too many projects were in progress and too few completed. Each new one started meant a further delay in the completion of a current one. Too many had no direct link with the needs and problems of the national economy and were therefore regarded by the politicians as a waste of time. An air of particular urgency prevailed after the announcement at the Fifth SED Party Conference in July 1958 that the GDR now aimed to outstrip the Federal Republic within a few years in the per capita consumption of foodstuffs and consumer articles, which presupposed a rapid improvement in scientific-technological expertise and excellence. In

---

[4] Schwertner/Kempe, p. 33; see also, for example, Wilhelm Girnus, "Zur Idee der sozialistischen Hochschule," in: Das Hochschulwesen, Monatsschrift für Fragen der Hochschulpolitik, Lehrmethodik und Hochschulorganisation, Jahrgang 1957, pp. 289-307, especially p. 290f.

[5] Manfred Rexin, "Die Entwicklung der Wissenschaftspolitik in der DDR," in: Rüdiger Thomas (ed.), Wissenschaft und Gesellschaft in der DDR, Munich 1971 pp. 78-121, here p. 97.

the light of the mounting pressure put upon them, academics fled to the West in sharply increasing numbers, at a time when the population at large appeared to be stabilising, as the overall refugee figures dropped.[6] The building of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 cut short this possibility of opting out, and just as relevant for the scientific progress of the GDR, precluded academic contacts and the scholarly exchange of ideas with colleagues from the West to all but a few trusted professors.

In the fifties there had been more exhortation than educational planning, but during the following decade streamlining began in earnest. The World Economic Conference in the summer of 1962 had spoken of the advent of the second scientific-technical revolution. The GDR was clearly playing a minor role in it and was anxious not to be left behind. A massive concentration on applied research was ordered, and industry, in the form of the Associations of Nationally-Owned Enterprises (Vereinigungen Volkseigener Betriebe - VVB), was awarded a more central role in the shaping of research. Indeed the VVBs set up their own separate research institutes, parallel to those of the universities and of the Academy of Sciences, a state of affairs which, in the light of the limited available resources, was only slowly seen to be out of phase with the demands for concentration, and remedied much later.

The first steps for a thoroughgoing reform of the entire educational system were taken in March 1963 with the setting-up of a government commission. A year later the Council of Ministers approved its recommendations, and finally on 25 February 1965, after further discussions and refinement, the "Law concerning the unified socialist education system" was passed by the People's

---

[6] Rexin, p. 119, gives the following refugee figures for university teachers: 43 (1956), 58 (1957), 208 (1958), 188 (1959), 142 (1960). Compare these with overall refugee numbers: 279,189 (1956), 261,622 (1957),204,092 (1958), 143,917 (1959), 199,188 (1960). SBZ von A bis Z, Ein Taschen- und Nachschlagebuch über die Sowjetische Besatzungszone Deutschlands, hrsg. vom Bundesministerium für gesamtdeutsche Fragen, 8. Auflage, Bonn 1963, p. 148.

Chamber.[7] This new Education Act effectively put higher education within reach of everyone. There were no more dead ends in the system provided by the strict separation of different types of schools: if the pupil failed to reach university from school, he could gain entry via alternative routes later on.

The backbone of the system, which still prevails today, is the ten-year general polytechnical school, covering the age group 6 - 16 years (see Table I). Prospective direct-entry university students then continue for a further two years in a class leading to the Abitur examination, whereas the majority begins industrial training. The latter does, however, still have a very real opportunity for subsequent university admission after a period of technical or adult education.

Having successfully modified the general structure of education, the government then turned to the higher education sector. The need for structural reforms here represented one of the central issues at the 11th Conference of the SED's Central Committee in December 1965. A proposal lay before it which was to act as the point of reference for the subsequent Third University Reform of 1968 and shape the East German system of higher education into its present-day form. This was the State Secretariat's paper, "Principles for the Further Development of Teaching and Research at the Universities of the German Democratic Republic."[8] In the New Year, the proposal was circulated to all universities and colleges, and comments were invited from both faculty members and students. One whole year was allowed for discussions to be held, experiments to take place, and suggestions and criticisms to be aired (in a manner

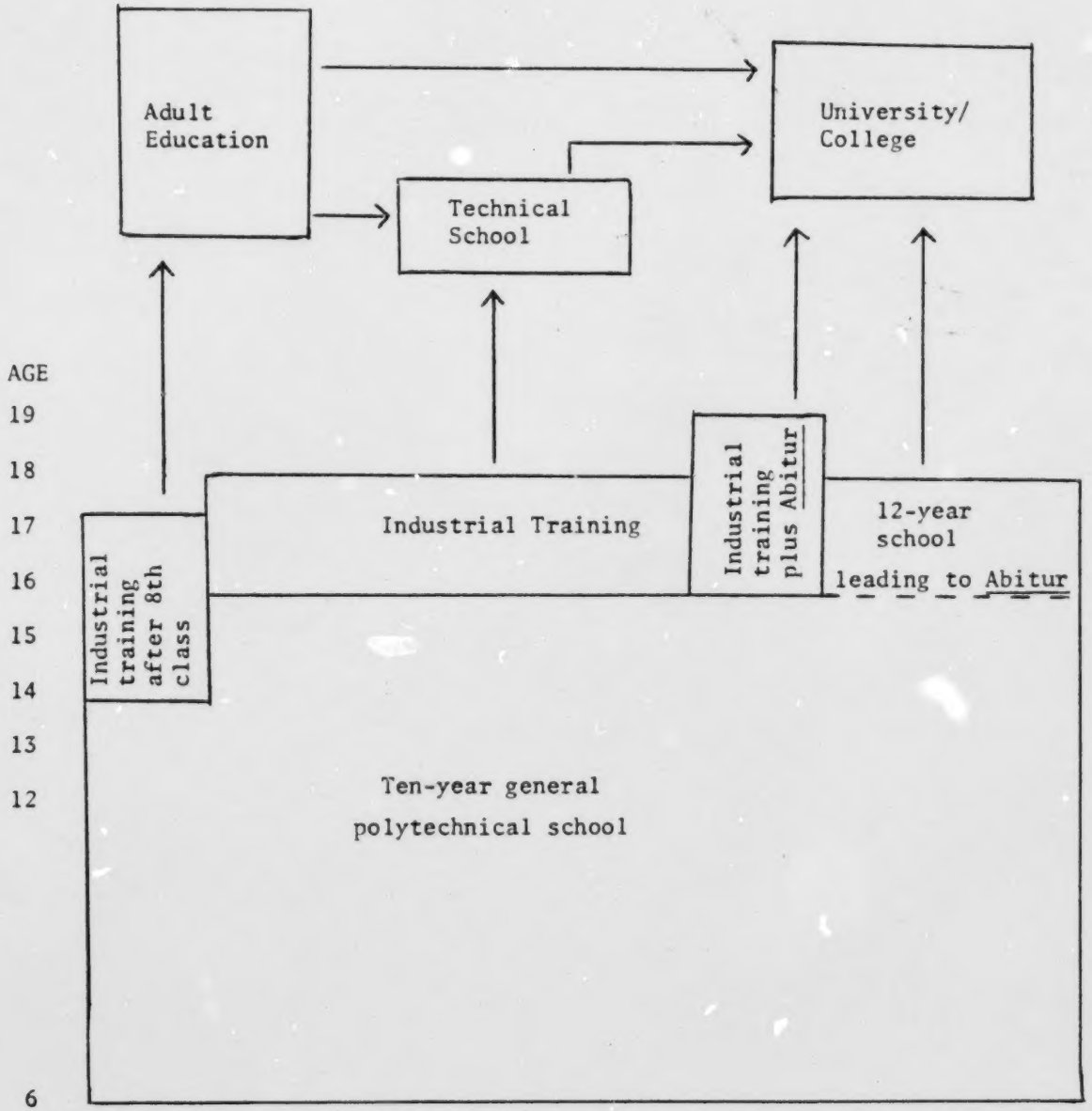
---

[7] Gesetz über das einheitliche sozialistische Bildungssystem vom 25. Februar 1965, reprinted in: Baske/Engelbert, Vol. II, p. 373ff.

[8] Prinzipien zur weiteren Entwicklung der Lehre und Forschung an den Hochschulen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik. Published as supplement to: Das Hochschulwesen 1966, Nr. 2.

TABLE I

The Education System of the German Democratic Republic after the 1965 Education Act



Source: Adapted from Helmut Klein, Education in a Socialist Country, Report on educational policy in the GDR, E. Berlin 1974, p. 61.

typical of the way in which the GDR likes to conduct the political process), before the subject was formally debated at the Fourth University Conference on 2 and 3 February 1967 in Berlin.[9] The detailed proposals of the Conference were formally endorsed by the Seventh SED Party Conference a few weeks later, and started to take effect at the beginning of 1968.

In the first place, undergraduate study was reduced from five to four years, and divided into two parts: basic study (Grundstudium) and subject study (Fachstudium). The tasks of the period of basic study were defined as the transmission of general knowledge in the natural sciences and humanities, as well as some basic specialist knowledge; the improvement of foreign language skills for the reading of scientific and technical texts; and the pursuit of sports and military training. The successful completion of the preliminary examination (Vorprüfung) acts as the prerequisite for advancement to the next stage. Subject study has as its tasks: the deepening of basic study; the exposition of the theoretical bases of the subject, and related problems of a mathematical, natural and social scientific, technological and economic nature; an explication of scientific methodology; the promotion of an ability to relate scientific data to practical projects; and the refinement of the creative capabilities of the students. Practical work outside the university is included in this period of study.[10] After the final examination (Hauptprüfung), the successful candidate is permitted to bear the title of his profession (e.g. Ingenieur Hans Schmidt).

---

[9] Die Aufgaben der Universitäten und Hochschulen im einheitlichen Bildungssystem der sozialistischen Gesellschaft, IV. Hochschulkonferenz (Protokoll), 2. und 3. Februar 1967 in Berlin, E. Berlin 1967.

[10] The former practice of a compulsory pre-university practical year in a factory was dropped, like its Soviet counterpart, as it was merely felt to hinder the work of the factories, and interrupt the educational process. Thomas Baylis, The Technical Intelligentsia and the East German Elite, Legitimacy and Social Change in Mature Communism, Berkeley 1974, p. 51.

In fact, the scheme has evolved in such a way that there is no sharp distinction between the two levels of study, and courses tend to overlap somewhat. However a definite hiatus exists between this undergraduate study and the other levels to which the more gifted students aspire. There are two parallel forms of postgraduate study, according to the ability of those students who pursue them. Specialised study (Spezialstudium) leads to a diploma after one year's work and the oral defence of a dissertation. Research study (Forschungsstudium) is designed for the ablest students, who spend two to three years working on their doctoral thesis. Thus the total study time from freshman year to doctorate has been foreshortened to six or seven years (instead of nine or ten) in order to satisfy the urgent demands of the economy for badly-needed, highly-skilled manpower in as short a time as is feasible.

The other main substantive proposal of the "Principles" was a sweeping re-organisation at the Faculty level. The traditional German subdivision of the university into a handful of Faculties (e.g. Philology, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Medicine, Law and Economics, Theology), was reshaped into more manageable units known as Sektionen, comparable to the departments of British and American universities. The innumerables institutes, built round a professorial chairholder and often unhealthy centres of patronage and sycophancy, were abolished and likewise merged into departments. In round numbers, some 190 departments took the place of 960 institutes.[11] Berlin's Humboldt University, for example, now has 26 departments, where formerly it comprised 169 institutes and 7 faculties.[12]

The present structure, as it has evolved since the 1968 reforms, may be represented diagrammatically as follows in Table II.

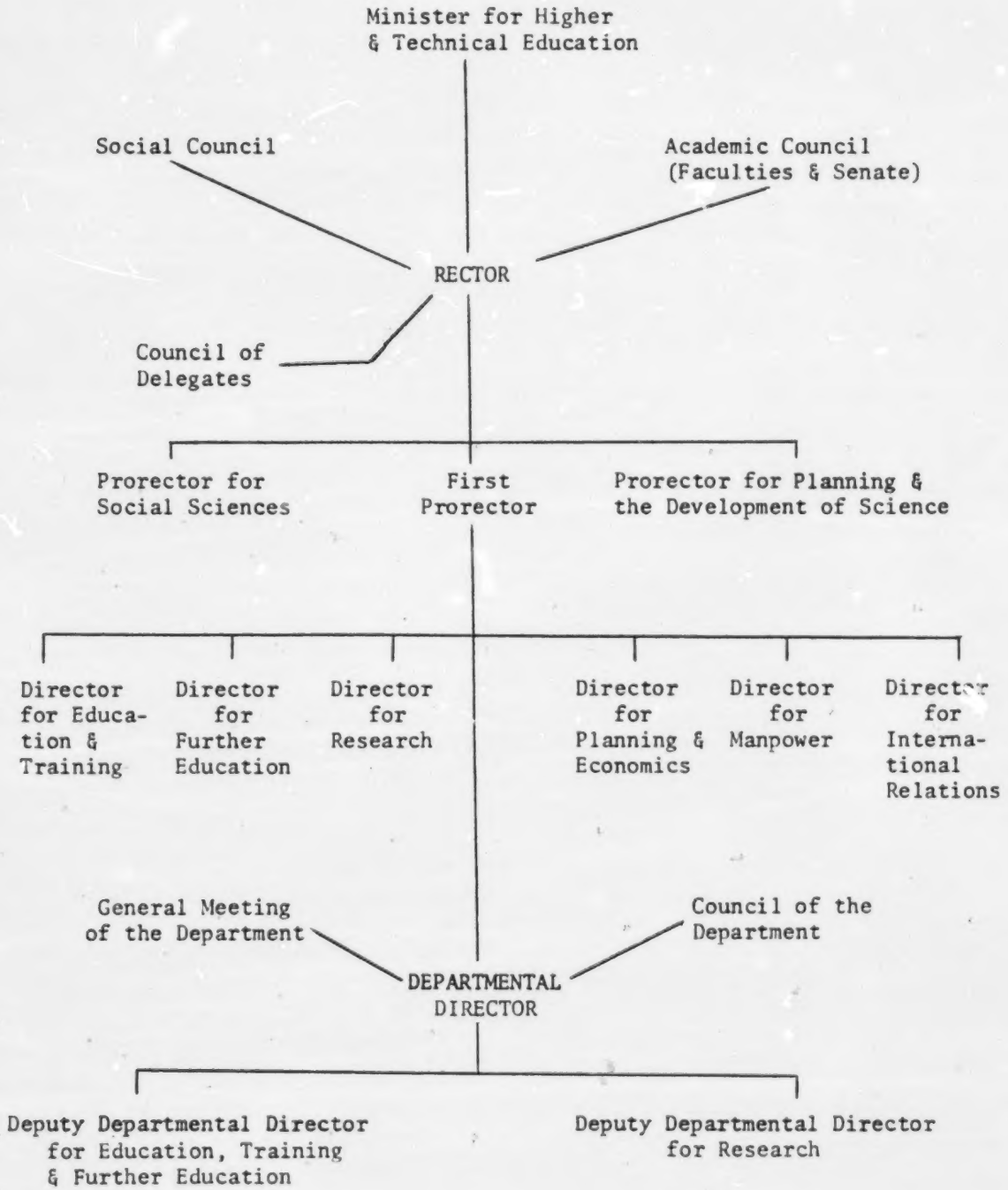
---

[11] Marianne Usko, Hochschulen in der DDR, W. Berlin 1974, p. 35.

[12] Helmut Lehmann & Hans-Jürgen Schulz, "Planning the teaching work at Humboldt University Berlin," in: Victor G. Onushkin (Ed.), Planning the development of universities IV, (International Institute for Educational Planning) Paris 1975, pp. 59-102, here p. 67. See also UNESCO Document ED-74/WS/52, Case Study on the Development of Higher Education in some East European Countries, Paris 26 October 1974, p. 44.

TABLE II

The Structure of the East German University


Minister for Higher & Technical Education
Social Council
Academic Council (Faculties & Senate)
RECTOR
Council of Delegates
Prorector for Social Sciences
First Prorector
Prorector for Planning & the Development of Science
Director for Education & Training
Director for Further Education
Director for Research
Director for Planning & Economics
Director for Manpower
Director for International Relations
General Meeting of the Department
Council of the Department
DEPARTMENTAL DIRECTOR
Deputy Departmental Director for Education, Training & Further Education
Deputy Departmental Director for Research

II

The Departments

The introduction of the Sektion was the most radical reform to take place in any of the Eastern European systems of higher education. It was also one of the most successful, and attempts to imitate the East German innovation have been detectable in the universities of other Socialist countries.[13] A central feature of these units in comparison with their predecessors is their flexibility. There is no grouping around chairs as before. Teaching and research clusters within the department are undoubtedly tailored primarily to the requirements of the nationally standardised curricula in the various fields, but they may and do form on an ad hoc basis according to the needs of a specific scientific task, often linked with local industry.[14]

The department is headed by a Director, and all powers of decision making within it are vested in him. His colleagues merely advise, and there are two channels through which they are able to perform this function. The General Meeting of the department (Versammlung der Sektion) is a forum in which all faculty members, students and staff may discuss, criticise and suggest improvements for the running of the department.[15] The director of the department is obliged to report biannually to this assembly on the attainment of departmental goals, and the plans for the future. He is not required to heed any

---

[13] UNESCO ED-74/WS/52, p. 45.

[14] Glaessner sees three basic types of department: those corresponding to a single branch of scholarship, those which are oriented primarily to the requirements of an industrial partner, and those which are more or less identical with disbanded Faculties. Gert-Joachim Glaessner, "Die Bedeutung der neuen Organisationsstruktur der Universitäten und Hochschulen der DDR für die veränderte Aufgabenstellung des Hochschulwesens im Rahmen der 3. Hochschulreform," in Studentische Politik - Informationen, Materialien, Berichte, hrsg. vom Forschungsinstitut der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 7/8 1971, p. 12.

[15] On the structure of the Department, see: Verordnung über die Aufgaben der Universitäten, wissenschaftlichen Hochschulen und wissenschaftlichen Einrichtungen mit Hochschulcharakter vom 25. Februar 1970, section VII, paras. 20 - 29, reprinted in: Hochschulgesetzgebung in der DDR, Dokumente zur Hochschulreform, Vol. XVIII, hrsg. von der Westdeutschen Rektorenkonferenz, Bonn-Bad Godesberg 1972, pp. 25-30.

advice he may receive, neither is the General Meeting empowered to pass formal motions either as mandates or as recommendations. Nonetheless, the machinery of democracy is there, and functions both as a safety valve for the members of the department, and as a barometer for its director to gauge the prevalent atmosphere.

One to three representative members of the various groups comprising the General Meeting (plus several external members, including representatives of industry with which the department is connected), are elected by that body as a whole into the Council of the Department (Rat der Sektion). This is once more an advisory committee, but one which, meeting at least four times a year, offers quite detailed advice on scientific, educational and financial matters to the director, who is its ex officio chairman. For the sake of procedural efficiency, it may not have more than twenty-five members. The Council proposes the appointment of the departmental director, which is then made, after the endorsement of the Ministry, by the rector, to whom the director is responsible and from whom he derives his power. Like most American departmental chairmen, the director does not hold the appointment indefinitely; the normal term of office lasts for a period of four years. The director may ask the rector to appoint deputies to assist him, in large departments up to three in number. Usually, there are two deputy directors, one covering education, training and further education, the other dealing with matters of research.

Research projects are co-ordinated and approved on the national level by the Ministry of Higher Education, in order to minimize any duplication of effort. However, the departments themselves are permitted to take the initiative in formulating the tasks in conjunction with local industry. Contracts are drawn up between the enterprise and the department directly; the former, not the government, provides the financial backing. Research is regarded as an important part of the learning process inasmuch as the student can observe

and, it is hoped, emulate the creative thinking which accompanies it, and thus acquire early the intellectual habits he will need after graduation. Great store is set by the active participation of all undergraduates in research projects as a preparation for their subsequent careers, in which many of them will be called upon to exercise their initiative and creativity in the solving of scientific or technological problems.

The Rectorate

Leadership of the East German university very definitely rests with the rector. The powers of government which German university senates lost in 1933 did not return after 1945.[16] It is the rector alone who makes and is responsible for all decisions affecting the university, though he is advised by several committees. This is known as "the principle of individual leadership and collective consultation", or, in Lenin's term, "democratic centralism".[17] Once more, it is the Minister who is ultimately responsible for the appointment, though it is the Academic Council of the university, selecting a candidate from among the full professors, which formally elects the rector, and must then seek ministerial endorsement. This Council may also propose extensions of a rector's term of office, which is initially a three-year appointment. Such extensions are common: for example, the former rector of the Humboldt University in Berlin, Prof. Karl-Heinz Wirzberger, who died in office in April 1976, was inaugurated in 1967.

As the rector's field of competence is so extensive, he is supported by

---

[16] A Prussian Education Ministry edict of 28 October 1933, imitated by the other federal states, turned the university senates into mere advisory bodies of the rector, who was now designated the "Führer" of the university. Giles, p. 117, and Hellmut Seier, "Der Rektor als Führer," Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte, 12. Jrg. 2. Heft, April 1964, p. 105.

[17] First used in Lenin's "Critical Remarks on the National Question" of 1913. Cf. Willy Odenthal, Der Begriff des demokratischen Zentralismus, seine Geschichte und seine Durchsetzung beim Staatsaufbau der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Diss. iur. Marburg 1961, p. 15f.

a number of assistants in specific areas: the prorectors and the (non-departmental) directors. The permanent deputy of the rector is the First Prorector. There is no specified number of further prorectors who may be appointed, but practice has led as a rule to the creation of two posts, namely those of the Prorector for Planning and the Development of Science (Prorektor für Prognose und Wissenschaftsentwicklung), and the Prorector for Social Sciences (Prorektor für Gesellschaftswissenschaften). The former works with a standing committee "to lead and co-ordinate the preparation for the elaboration and determination of the strategic line of the scientific development of the university."[18] His reports are used not only by the rector, but also by the Academic and Social Councils of the university as an aid to the formulation of their recommendations to the rector. The Prorector for Social Sciences appears to be a sort of ideological overseer, whose task it is to ensure the smooth co-ordination and unity of Marxist-Leninist teaching throughout the university.

The directors who assist the rector are six in number at most colleges and, like the prorectors, are full-time administrators.[19] Their offices are expected "to prepare decisions for the rector and to organise, control and analyse their execution" in the following respective areas:

a) Education and training
b) Further education
c) Research
d) Planning and economics
e) Manpower
f) International relations.[20]

---

[18] Karl-Heinz Wirzberger, "Die Humboldt-Universität auf dem Wege zur sozialistischen Universität," in: Das Hochschulwesen 1968, p. 542.

[19] Verordnung über die Aufgaben ... vom 25. Februar 1970, para 15, loc.cit. p. 23.

[20] At medical academies there is also a Director for Medical Practice. Berlin originally experimented with a Director for Cultural and Public Relations, cf. Wirzberger, p. 542. See also Fritz Drewitz & Peter Hinze, "Die sozialistische Hochschulreform an der TH 'Otto von Guericke' Magdeburg, Einige Erfahrungen und Ergebnisse," in: Das Hochschulwesen 1968, pp. 545-565, esp. p. 559.

The Council of Delegates

Of the three bodies which advise the rector, the Council of Delegates (Konzil) is the least important. It consists of representatives of the faculty, students, and non-academic staff, and generally meets once a year at the rector's behest. Although it officially deliberates on "the preparation and fulfillment of the main tasks of education, training, further education and research",[21] it is not clear what tangible benefit accrues from this discussion, if indeed it still takes place, since this Council is not required to report to any particular agency. A recent East German report does not even include it among the advisory bodies of the rector.[22] It now appears to do little more than receive the rector's Annual Report. Its only active role is in selecting the university representatives for the Social Council.

The Social Council

The function of the Social Council (Gesellschaftlicher Rat) is primarily to ensure that the development of the socialist university (in its broadest sense) proceeds apace. Not merely is it concerned with the "class education" of members of the university community, but with the realisation of economic priorities, collaboration with external agencies and enterprises, the conditions of work and life of university members, and the organisation of scholarship. The Social Council has the authority to demand detailed reports from groups or persons inside the university, but also from external enterprises on their co-operative relationships with the university. This, then, is a powerful committee, and although it is by statute entirely subordinate to the rector, in practice its recommendations to him are of a virtually mandatory

---

[21] Verordnung über die Aufgaben ... vom 25. Februar 1970, para. 17, loc. cit. p. 24.

[22] Lehmann/Schulz, p. 66.

nature.[23] The Council comprises not more than fifty members, including such figures as directors and representatives of public enterprises and scientific institutions; deputies of parliamentary bodies; heads and officials of state organisations; the rector and prorectors of the university; representatives of local and university political organisations; university teachers, research workers and students; and workers and university technical staff. The rector, prorectors and the University Officers of the SED, the FDJ youth movement, and the Trades Union Federation (FDGB) are ex officio members. Neither the rector, nor the prorectors or directors (departmental or non-departmental) are eligible for the positions of chairman or vice-chairman of the Social Council. Standing or ad hoc committees may be formed for specific tasks at any time, but plenary sessions are held twice a year. Each Council is formed on a three-year basis, but members may be re-elected for the new term.[24] Representation is divided roughly equally between university and non-university delegates in most cases. The Social Council of Berlin's Humboldt University consisted in 1971 of thirty-nine members, including:

Members of the university

2 Prorectors
3 Leaders of university political groups (SED, FDJ, FDGB)
4 Professors
3 Students
3 Employees

External representatives

2 SED representatives
5 representatives from state organisations
8 representatives of organisations and enterprises in partnership with the university
3 delegates from the Schools Administration
1 FDJ representative.[25]

---

[23] Thomas Ammer, "Leitung und Organisation des DDR-Hochschulwesens," in: Deutschlandarchiv, Zeitschrift für Fragen der DDR und der Deutschlandpolitik, 3. Jahrgang 1970, Heft 8, p. 886.

[24] Anordnung über die Stellung, Aufgaben und Arbeitsweise der Gesellschaftlichen Räte an den Hochschulen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik vom 1. August 1969, in: Gesetzblatt der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik II, Nr. 75, 5 Sept. 1969, pp.465-7.

[25] Usko, p. 38.

The outside delegates sometimes are prominent public figures. In 1969 Rostock University's Council included such notables as the Mayor of Rostock, the First Secretary of the regional Party leadership, the Director of the Rostock People's Theatre, the Director-General of the city's Shipbuilding Enterprise, and the Chief-of-Staff of the Navy.[26]

The Academic Council

This body, the Wissenschaftliche Rat, which deals with academic matters, is the one which most closely approximates the former Senate at German universities. Although the Council, unlike its predecessor, does not have statutory decision-making powers, its recommendations to the rector are, as in the case of the Social Council, more or less binding. The rector is the chairman of the Academic Council, and the Prorector for Planning and the Development of Science is ex officio the deputy chairman. The members are elected for three-year terms by the General Meetings of the various departments, the rector specifying how many delegates a department may choose.[27] There is no limit to the size of the Council, and at the Humboldt University, for example, there are some one hundred members. In 1971/72 these comprised:

65 Professors
5 Lecturers
10 Scientific Assistants
12 Students
1 Nurse
1 Medical Assistant
4 SED representatives.[28]

---

[26] Ammer, op. cit. p. 886; and Thomas Ammer, Universität zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur, Ein Beitrag zur Nachkriegsgeschichte der Universität Rostock, Cologne 1969, p. 114.

[27] Anordnung über die Stellung, Aufgaben und Arbeitsweise der Wissenschaftlichen Räte an den Hochschulen vom 15. März 1970, reprinted in: Dokumente zur Hochschulreform Vol. XVIII, p. 55-62.

[28] Usko, p. 39. In 1969 the Council at the Technical University of Dresden numbered 140 members (Ammer, Leitung, p. 887), while the Humboldt University Berlin at that time had only 53 members (Erwin Rohde, "Aufgaben und Struktur des Wissenschaftlichen Rates," in: Das Hochschulen 1969, p. 160).

Since frequent plenary sessions would not be in the interests of the efficient conduct of business, the Council is sub-divided into smaller units, and only meets as a whole about twice a year. The only specific task of the plenum is the election of the rector.

As the Council is the agency which awards degrees and the licence to teach at the university (facultas docendi), and moreover advises the rector on questions of academic appointments, it is only reasonable that it should split up into groups competent to pass judgement in the various academic fields. Thus it is that the Council is divided into Faculties (Fakultäten) along traditional lines. Humboldt University began with three, covering Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Biological Sciences, and Social Sciences, but today has added Medicine. The Faculty meets at least once every two months, and is headed by a Dean (Dekan), who is elected by the Faculty, subject to the rector's approval.[29] The creation of Faculties, or the addition of new ones, must receive ministerial endorsement (as is the case with new departments) in order to take effect.

The presidium of the Academic Council, which conducts the day-to-day business between plenary sessions, is designated the Senate (Senat). The rector, prorectors and deans are members ex officio, the rector serving as chairman. There are also representatives of the SED, the FDJ, and the FDGB, and two or three each from the ranks of the university teachers, scientific assistants and students.

---

[29] It seems that some Deans have been acting on rather too traditional lines. The Minister recently felt obliged to point out that the Academic Council is an advisory body, and that therefore neither it nor the deans have any power to issue instructions to the departments; their job is to advise the rector. Hans-Joachim Böhme, "Unsere Aufgaben im Hinblick auf den IX. Parteitag der SED 1976," in: Das Hochschulwesen 1975, p. 278.

The Ministry

As mentioned before, regional control of higher education was finally halted by the creation of a strong, central State Secretariat for Higher Education in February 1951. Responsibility for vocational training was added in 1958, when the State Secretariat was given jurisdiction over technical schools (Fachschulen) as well. On 11 August 1967, an edict restyled the State Secretariat as the Ministry of Higher and Technical Education, thus underlining the increased importance attached to this field during the sixties.

While the majority of universities and colleges are controlled by the MHF, there are some which fall under the authority of other bodies. Colleges of music and the arts are the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture; teacher training colleges are run by the Ministry of Education; and the Party (through its Central Committee) and the Defence Ministry each have some half-dozen colleges. Despite this, the MHF can issue directives to colleges run by other ministries in terms of broad planning, as for example of overall student numbers and of the curriculum for Marxist-Leninist political training.[30]

The relationship of the Minister to the Ministry is similar to that of the rector to the university. At both levels, the "principle of individual leadership and collective consultation" holds.[31] All decisions are made and enacted in the last resort by the Minister alone. The 1969 statute declares him responsible to the People's Chamber, the Council of State, and the Council of Ministers, whereas the earlier 1965 statute of the State Secretariat included (and in first place) the SED Central Committee. There are parallels in the description of the Ministry's basis for its work: the 1969 statute names

---

[30] Ammer, Leitung, p. 883. The MHF has, however, no jurisdiction whatever over Party, Army or Trades Union colleges.

[31] Verordnung über des Statut des Ministeriums für Hoch- und Fachschulwesen vom 15. Oktober 1969, para. 13, in: Gesetzblatt der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik II Nr. 89, 14 November 1969, p. 551.

first of all inter alia the Constitution of the GDR, while in 1965 the decisions of the SED had pride of place, to the exclusion of the constitution.[32] This in fact reflects a merely formal shift in emphasis of political power in the GDR towards the state organs.

The Minister is advised by a University and Technical School Council (Hoch- und Fachschulrat), the composition and activities of which he may decide himself. It makes recommendations to him on problems of long-range planning, and on the basic guidelines for the content, development and organisation of education. For more detailed advice in specific areas, the Minister will sometimes turn to a particular university department for reports on certain questions, especially curricular; or he may form for this purpose Scientific Advisory Committees (Wissenschaftliche Beiräte).

In the terms of the 1969 statute, the sphere of influence of the Ministry extends over the following areas:

1. Intensification of the effectiveness of political-ideological and weltanschaulich education for the realisation of the model graduate, and for the achievement of the unity of research and teaching at the highest scientific and technical levels, as the basis of training, education and further education, and of the creation of scientific-productive study and research-oriented teaching.

2. Setting of nomenclature of the basic and specialist subjects of study, and the guaranteeing of the orderly production of model training materials; confirmation of the outline study programmes for basic study, and also the production and endorsement of the teaching programmes for Marxist-Leninist basic study; development of language training; development and institution of modern teaching and learning methods, including the systematic development of text-books on the basis of the model training materials, and the assurance of the inclusion in text-books of the most recent scientific perceptions; general introduction of advanced teaching and learning methods, and the guaranteeing of their usage and further development, confirmation of the basic regulations of the form, course and organisation of studies.

---

32 Ibid., and Verordnung über das Statut des Staatssekretariats für das Hoch- und Fachschulwesen vom 3. Juni 1965, para. 1, reprinted in: Baske/Engelbert II, p. 451.

3. Determination of the principles of socialist military training in accordance with the instructions of the central state organs; promotion of physical fitness and sport as a component part of the training and education of students, and of the conditions of work and life of all members of universities and colleges.

4. Laying-down of principles for the agencies offering advice on university and college study, application for admission and choice of subject; and the publication of appropriate materials and determination of regulations for the guidance and securing of school graduates.

5. Setting-up of a multi-level system of further education for university and college graduates in all areas of socialist society; production of versatile teaching programmes and materials; dissemination of pedagogical experience and employment of modern methods of instruction; co-ordination of research for the development of further education; evaluation of international experience; construction of a documentation service on further education; planning, direction and organisation of university and college correspondence courses.

6. Development of the further education of university teachers, scientific assistants and graduates in the field of Marxism-Leninism, in order to ensure a high political-ideological level of academic work and teaching; development of teaching manpower and planning of chairs according to the demands of society and scholarship.[33]

One of the Ministry's central concerns, and certainly its most problematical, is in the field of manpower planning, which it tries to pursue to a high degree of exactitude. In theory, no student is admitted to a course of study unless there is a job waiting for him upon graduation. The apparatus that is required to make this type of prediction with any degree of reliability is, of course, extremely complex and cannot always be totally accurate. If it should, however, occur that the appropriate post is not available at the time of graduation, the graduate is entitled to a position commensurate in status and remuneration with that for which his degree had prepared him. The universities have such close ties with neighbouring industry in their scientific-technological pursuits that courses in some departments inevitably prepare their students best for local posts. Regional considerations do therefore

---

[33] Verordnung Statut Ministerium 15 Oct. 1969, para. 3, Gesetzblatt DDR 14 Nov. 1969, p. 548.

enter into the planning of student numbers. This practice of local job-slotting tends to curtail sharply inter-regional mobility, since planners cannot predict how many people in any year may wish to move to different areas of the country.

While research activities vary from university to university, the basic teaching curriculum is laid down by the Ministry, which works out for each subject of study a skeleton timetable with the number of hours per week, and weeks per year, to be spent on particular topics. This is a lengthy and ongoing task, and the timetables by no means exist for all subjects yet.

The Ministry is assisted in its planning activities by two external agencies: The Institute for Scientific Theory and Organisation, attached to the GDR Academy of Sciences, and the Research Institute for Higher Education at the Humboldt University in Berlin (though the former body has perhaps closer ties to the Ministry of Science and Technology). Summarily, one might say that the focus of the former is on science itself, on understanding the scientific process and organising scientific activity in such a way that maximum efficiency and optimal return are achieved. The latter institute concentrates on the educational process, and conducts surveys of, for example, the success of ideological training to produce the "socialist personality", or of the effectiveness of audio-visual teaching methods. It also deals with matters of educational politics, such as the implementation of equal educational rights for women, and produces sociological studies as well as international comparisons on various aspects of higher education.[34]

III

In view of the concern for manpower planning, application for admission to an East German university or college is not a procedure left up to the

[34] A list of publications of the institute may be found in: 10 Jahre Institut für Hochschulbildung, E. Berlin 1974, pp. 50-55.

individual. The school-pupil receives counselling on career matters, and is advised in appropriate cases as to the Faculty and college to which he should apply. His choice is limited to a single university or college, though he may list an alternative choice of subject on his application. In addition to a successful school-leaving examination, the prospective candidate needs references from his school and from the Party organisation to which he belongs (normally the FDJ). However, these testimonials are not in the nature of confidential reports, and each one is countersigned by the student in question. All other academic and social qualities being equal, preference is given to applicants who have served in the Armed Forces or in industry, provided that suitable recommendations are forthcoming from these also. In some fields, entrance examinations are held, but the Minister decides from year to year where this is necessary. Notwithstanding this stipulation, particularly gifted candidates, who have passed the Abitur with honours, are exempted from them. The Ministry is now attempting to phase out these supplementary entrance examinations, wishing to rely solely on Abitur performances and the other reports. For certain subjects, an option of "pre-matriculation" (Vorimmatrikulation) is being introduced, whereby the candidate is accepted for college but may defer commencement of his course in order to spend a period gaining practical experience in industry.[35] The Admissions Committees, headed by the respective deans of the Faculties, are required to justify in writing their non-acceptances. However, there is nothing to stop the failed candidate from re-applying the following year,[36] although this is unlikely to

---

[35] Hans-Joachim Böhme, "Unsere Aufgaben im Hinblick auf den IX. Parteitag der SED 1976," in: Das Hochschulwesen 1975, p. 270.

[36] Unless he exceeds the age limit for matriculation, namely 35 years for full-time students, and 45 years for correspondence and evening students. Anordnung über das Aufnahmeverfahren zum Direkt-, Fern- und Abendstudium an den Universitäten, Hoch-und Fachschulen vom 20. Februar 1963, para. 3, reprinted in: Baske/Engelbert II, p. 249.

occur so soon, since attempts will be made to persuade him to follow a different career. For a well-qualified student, for whom there is no longer a place available in his desired subject of study, the Admissions Committee itself will suggest other fields where there are still vacancies.[37] In recent years, college applicants with a school-leaving certificate exceeded admissions figures by some 40% - 50%. Pre-selection at the school level, then, has no finality about it, and the Faculty Admissions Committees at the universities are allowed a real choice of candidates.[38]

Just as the words university (Universität) and college (Hochschule) denote in the GDR institutions of equal rank, so also there is equality of status between the three different types of undergraduate study which may be pursued, in that they all lead to an equivalent qualification. The majority of students are full-time members of a university or college (Direktstudium), but a large proportion prepares for diplomas in correspondence courses (Fernstudium) (see Table III). The latter are usually people already working in industry, who are considered capable of higher qualifications and sponsored by the management of their enterprise, which pays the annual fees of 120 marks.[39] The firm is committed to releasing these students from work for a number of days (up to fifty-two) each year so that they may attend certain lectures. They also receive paid leave of up to six months to complete a dissertation at the end of their course. Similar privileges hold good for students who take evening courses (Abendstudium). These are also working people, who happen to live in a university town, and can thus easily attend evening classes. However, the numbers pursuing this third option have

---

[37] Usko, p. 76.

[38] UNESCO ED-74/WS/52, p. 29.

[39] Volkmar Stanke, Student und Studium in der DDR, Eine Information über sozialistische Hoschschulpolitik, E. Berlin (Neuauflage) 1973, p. 52f. There are no tuition fees for full-time students.

TABLE III

Students at Universities and Colleges according to Form of Study

YEAR	Full-time	Correspondence	Evening
1951	27,822	3,690	-
1955	60,148	14,594	-
1960	69,129	22,544	1,221
1965	74,896	29,548	3,372
1970	100,204	36,276	1,277
1971	110,991	39,344	1,194
1972	113,665	39,050	618
1973	109,537	35,177	492
1974	105,020	30,462	360

Source: Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1968; Statistical Pocket Book of the German Democratic Republic 1975.

dwindled so much that there has been talk of dropping it altogether (see Table III).[40]

A fourth kind of study, to which very great importance is attached, is further or continuing education (Weiterbildung). There is concern that graduates, particularly in the technical sciences, should keep abreast of the latest developments in their rapidly changing fields. At present, short and long-term courses in some 32 fields are being conducted to meet this need. This is the only sector of higher education which is still expanding. Whereas universities and colleges provided further education courses for 12,300 such students in 1972, the number had risen to 20,700 in 1974.[41]

While a satisfactory political record is a sine qua non for university entrance, policies of positive discrimination towards candidates with a working-class background have now been dropped in favour of the promotion of academic excellence.[42] The government stopped publishing statistics on the social background of students after 1967, at which time the children of the intelligentsia were gaining ever-stronger footholds. Probably excluded still from full-time study in large measure, because of lingering discriminatory policies, they nevertheless qualified widely for correspondence and evening courses, and represented over half of these students (see Tables IV and V). But it was not so much the desire for the suppression of embarassing trends in the class structure of the student body which brought an end to these statistical surveys; rather the rigid class dogmatism of the fifties had been

---

[40] Usko, p. 80.

[41] Böhme, p. 271.

[42] Mieskes is fortunately out-of-date in his emotional 1971 description of the admissions process as "one of the humanly most tragic and academically saddest chapters" of post-war German university history. Class background is no longer the touchstone that it was in the fifties, to the neglect of considerations of ability. Hans Mieskes, Die Pädagogik der DDR in Theorie, Forschung und Praxis - Entwicklung und Entwicklungsstand, Oberursel/Taunus 1971, Vol. II, p. 248f.

TABLE IV

Social Background of students at universities and colleges as a percentage of the whole student body

Year	Workers %	Employees %	Members of Co-operatives %	Intelligentsia %	Self-employed %	Others %
Full-time students						
1960	50.3	19.2	4.2	15.6	8.0	2.7
1965	40.6	24.0	6.7	18.7	6.7	3.3
1966	39.1	23.5	7.2	19.7	6.9	3.6
1967	38.2	23.5	7.8	20.4	7.1	3.0
Correspondence and evening students						
1960	7.3	61.8	0.8	27.9	2.0	0.2
1965	11.3	30.6	3.3	52.7	1.3	0.9
1966	11.4	29.4	1.7	55.7	1.3	0.5
1967	11.9	30.8	1.8	53.8	1.4	0.4

Source: Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1968

TABLE V

Representation of Peasant and Working Classes
in the Student Body

Year	% of full-time students	% of grant holders
1951	41.0	46.6
1955	54.8	62.0
1960	56.0	62.8
1961	55.0	61.9
1962	53.6	63.3
1963	50.4	58.5
1964	47.5	55.9
1965	47.6	56.6
1966	46.4	56.4
1967	45.8	55.3

Calculated from: Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1968

relaxed in favour of a more practical realism which sought what was best for scientific and technological excellence. Moreover the creation of the comprehensive school by the 1965 Education Act had formally brought an equal meritocratic opportunity for all, thus robbing the statistics of their relevance. At the same time, the Workers' and Peasants' Faculties, which had provided preparatory courses for university entrance, were phased out, apart from a token two at Halle and Freiberg.[43]

While the higher education sector has been acknowledged since the sixties to be one of the most vital factors in the successful advance of the economy and the nation, there is no longer the simplistic feeling that the more institutions and the more graduates there are, the more progress there will be. Student figures peaked in 1972 and have declined since then (see Table VI). The Ministry does not envisage a further increase.[44] However, the GDR has already achieved a high percentage of university and college freshmen in each age cohort, for example 16.7% in the year 1970/71 (with 39.5% enjoying some form of tertiary education), which compares favourably with other Eastern European countries such as Czechoslovakia (10.5%), Rumania (9.1%) and Hungary (8.9%), and is surpassed only by the Soviet Union (21.1% in universities and colleges, with 52% in tertiary education overall).[45] Equal opportunity for women college applicants is an established practice, and it is particularly noticeable that their numbers did not suffer reductions after 1972, so that they now represent 47.8 % of the student body (see Table VI).

---

[43] Ibid., p. 246. Perhaps because of their dubious pedagogical success, cf. Baylis, p. 48.

[44] Böhme, p. 274f.

[45] Statistische Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung der dritten Bildungsstufe und der Hochschulausbildung in einigen sozialistischen und kapitalistischen Staaten (Institut für Hochschulbildung, Studien zur Hochschulentwicklung Nr. 45), Teil I, p. 23.

TABLE VI

Overall student numbers, freshmen and graduates per year from universities and colleges

(Bracketed figures denote percentage of women students)

Year	Total Students		Freshmen		Graduates	
1951	31,512	(20.3)	--		4,631	
1955	74,742	(25.6)	19,113		7,617	
1960	101,773	(24.9)	31,167		15,136	
1965	108,791	(26.1)	23,994		20,190	
1970	138,541	(35.6)	41,594	(37.7)	20,524	(30.7)
1971	152,315	(37.5)	41,676	(41.2)	22,730	(34.2)
1972	153,997	(41.2)	36,537	(49.9)	26,061	(35.3)
1973	145,718	(45.2)	31,268	(54.7)	31,929	(37.1)
1974	136,417	(47.8)	32,218	(49.6)	34,300	(39.4)

Source: Adapted from Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1968, and 1975.

The size of the teaching body is also levelling off. There are currently some 5,100 professors and lecturers, together with 25,000 assistants (excluding medicine). Although the creation of some new posts is planned, especially in the basic study of Marxism-Leninism, the medical sciences and in the engineering colleges, the central concern is now "the strengthening of the effectiveness of available forces through the raising of qualifications, through rational organisation, and through the elimination of disturbances of the work process."[46] More effective utilisation of available resources: this has been the theme of every major speech on higher education for the last few years, the consistent watchword and the goal. This is now all the more necessary as higher education has received a steadily decreasing proportion of the state budget since 1970 (see Table VII). One should not necessarily deduce from this a decline in the importance attached to the university sector, since research has for some time been linked increasingly to the state-owned enterprises, which now finance "privately" over 80% of the research carried out at East German universities.[47] Nonetheless, the maintenance of chairs and lectureships, and the payment of student grants remains the responsibility of the Ministry, and thus the curbing of expansion may be viewed in the light of this budgetary reduction.

The proportion of students which the state does support financially is indeed large though slowly declining (see Table VII).[48] All full-time students whose parents' income does not exceed 1,500 marks per month are eligible, and they receive a monthly basic grant of 110-190 marks.[49] Although this may sound

---

[46] Böhme, p. 274f.

[47] Kurt Sontheimer & Wilhelm Bleek, The Government & Politics of East Germany, London 1975, p. 137.

[48] Mieskes' percentages give a false picture, since he fails to take into account that only full-time students are eligible for grants. Mieskes, Vol. II, p. 248.

[49] If there are more than 3 children in the family, the limit on parental income is 2,000 marks. Anordnung über die Gewährung von Stipendien an Direktstudenten der Universitäten, Hoch- und Fachschulen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik - Stipendienordnung - vom 28. August 1975, in: Gesetzblatt der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik I, Nr. 39, 14 October 1975 pp. 664-9.

Table VII

The Higher Education Budget

Year	Annual State Expenditure Millions Marks	Education Expenditure Millions M	Education as Percentage of State Budget	Expenditure on universities and colleges 1000s Marks	Universities and colleges as % of Education budget	Universities and colleges as % of State budget
1960	49,457.7	3,613	7.3%	552,148	15.28%	1.12%
1961	50,764.3	3,728	7.34	602,897	16.17	1.19
1962	55,502.5	3,802	6.85	616,017	16.20	1.11
1963	56,085	3,894	6.94	609,791	15.66	1.09
1964	56,317.4	4,074	7.23	590,804*	14.50	1.05
1965	55,759.1	4,351	7.80	615,869	14.16	1.10
1966	60,831.4	4,613	7.58	622,882	13.50	1.02
1967	59,026.1	4,852	8.22	631,376	13.01	1.07
1968	59,505.3	4,964	8.34	649,472	13.08	1.09
1969	64,984.6	5,263	8.10	720,881	13.70	1.11
1970	69,954.4	5,812	8.31	849,123	14.61	1.21
1971	79,125.1	6,369.366	8.05	915,986	14.38	1.16
1972	85,747.6	6,836.657	7.97	974,072	14.25	1.14
1973	93,276.7	7,274.519	7.80	985,000	13.54	1.06
1974	103,291.9	7,833.446	7.58	1021,452	13.04	0.99

Calculated from figures in: Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1965, 1968, 1971 & 1975
Statistical Pocket Book of the German Democratic Republic 1975

*From 1964 without Institutes for medical theory

TABLE VIII

Full-time students in receipt of grants

Year	Total full-time students	Grantholders	As Percentage
1951	27,822	24,484	88.00%
1955	60,148	53,146	88.36
1960	69,129	61,684	89.23
1965	74,896	62,969	84.07
1970	100,204	91,296	91.11
1971	110,991	101,021	91.01
1972	113,665	98,750	86.88
1973	109,537	94,182	85.98
1974	105,020	90,279	85.96

Source: Adapted from Statistisches Jahrbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik 1975

scanty in comparison to the 1974 average monthly labour income of 860 marks,[50] it is just about adequate. Tuition fees do not exist, and room rents in a student dormitory are maintained at the merely token level of approximately ten marks a month, while meals in the university refectory still cost less than one mark.[51] Even those students precluded by their parents' high income[52] are still eligible for so-called achievement grants after their second year of study, which may amount to up to 80 marks a month, and are awarded both for academic excellence and for outstanding political activism.[53] Student grants serve, then, to encourage talented young people, particularly from average and low-income families, to take up study without the fear of significant financial hardship. The purpose of such grants is now squarely the promotion of scholarship, and no longer predominantly the advancement of the working class. The Wilhelm Pieck Studentships, for example, inaugurated in 1951 at a rate of 300 marks a month solely for students from working-class and peasant families, were changed in 1971 into a scholarship prize based purely on academic merit.[54]

IV

How far can it be said that the ideal of the "socialist university" has already been achieved? In the first place, the East Germans themselves would

---

[50] Statistical Pocket Book of the German Democratic Republic, E. Berlin 1975, p. 105.

[51] Some 70% of full-time students were able to live in university housing in 1973 (Usko, p. 119). Since privately-rented rooms would be both considerably more expensive, and also very scarce in the continuing GDR housing shortage, one concludes that most of the others lived at home.

[52] For example, the children of academics. The basic salary of a professor at the starting-level was fixed in 1968 at 2450 marks per month, and that of lecturer at 1,550 marks. Verordnung über die Vergütung der Hochschullehrer an den wissenschaftlichen Hochschulen - Hochschullehrervergütungsordnung - vom 6. November 1968, Anlage 2, reprinted in: Hochschulgesetzgebung in der DDR, Dokumente zur Hochschulreform, Vol. VIII, hrsg. von der Westdeutschen Rektorenkonferenz, Bonn-Bad Godesberg 1969, p. 70.

[53] Stipendienordnung 28 Aug. 1975, para. 10, loc. cit., p. 667.

[54] Usko, p. 85.

never admit that such a broad aim had been realised, for the rhetoric of their ideology depends heavily upon the notion of constant striving. Yet in two important ways the "socialist university" has been realised. Firstly, the East German universities and colleges serve closely the needs of society as perceived by the political leadership. This is not to say that the universities are forced to acquiesce in the permanent constrictions of the ministerial straitjacket, for it has been seen that they do have the freedom to plan themselves a good deal of their research activities in conjunction with local enterprises. This open and strong integration into the local community cannot but benefit the university, both in terms of the esteem of the populace, and of the stimulation and gratification which academics must experience on seeing the practical results of their labour. A major shortcoming of East German research is the overwhelming concentration on applied research, as most of it has direct relevance to the industry which sponsors it. The short-term benefits of this for industry may well be outweighed by the serious long-term consequences, if a decided shift in favour of basic and pure research is not rapidly effected. In recent years this danger for long-range scientific progress has been recognised, but the remedial steps are being taken only haltingly. The sponsors still think in terms of the practical results accruing to them.

The second way in which the university has become more "socialist" was one of its earliest concerns, namely its student profile. It is certainly true that the gates of the university are now as open to the peasant and working classes as to anyone else, if the individual possesses the intellectual equipment to profit from a course of study in higher education, and can thus in turn be of benefit to society. And if the children of the intelligentsia do make better candidates, because of the habits of their home, then they are accepted in preference. In this sense, the university has become no more

"classless" than the rest of GDR society, but is rather a "well-differentiated meritocracy."[55] Indeed, one might interpret the percentages of Table VIII as indicative of the fact that more children of the highly-salaried intelligentsia, who are ineligible for full grants because of their parents' income, are gaining colleges places. Although the intelligentsia cannot be described as a class, which in Communist theory must be based upon a distinctive relationship to the means of production,[56] it is almost treated as one, and in positive terms, as something desirable to belong to. In Erich Honecker's recent message of appreciation, for example, on his election as Secretary-General of the SED's Central Committee at the 9th Party Congress, he specifically addressed his thanks to the workers, the peasants and the intelligentsia.[57] However, the intelligentsia is certainly not a self-perpetuating class in terms of its social position. Its children do not gain admission to college because of their social, intellectual or economic background, but only with the help of a good school record and satisfactory FDJ reports, in which they have no innate advantage over others.

Graduates in the GDR do form an elite, and to the universities and colleges devolves the responsibility of providing the country with this once-more prestigious intelligentsia. They are presenting the nation with just what its leaders have asked for: highly-trained specialists, who in their multifarious jobs have hoisted the GDR economy into its present position, and given the East Germans the highest standard of living in the whole of the Communist bloc. If an intelligentsia of narrowly-trained experts is in the long run found to

---

55 Sontheimer/Bleek, p. 141.

56 It is described rather as an "intermediary stratum" (Zwischenschicht). Baylis, p. 64.

57 Neues Deutschland, 26 May 1976, p. 2.

be less advantageous to progress than now assumed, then the universities cannot be blamed entirely. They are held ultimately on a leash and can only move in a circle at a certain distance from the Ministry. The machinery for criticism is well-developed, and the various councils at the university and departmental levels do provide a valuable forum for the proposal and discussion of reform. Serious and well-considered suggestions do sooner or later (and usually later or ultimately) have an effect at higher levels, as for example the problem of basic research. But the East German state is always conservative on the question of change, lest it be held that its previous policies were inappropriate and short-sighted. It is otiose to bemoan the formal powerlessness of the advisory bodies. Even if the Minister does keep his ear to the ground rather more earnestly than he extends his hand to the petitioner, change does occur. And even if it comes from above, one may be sure (as was particularly evident in the preliminary stages of the Third University Reform) that the Ministry is fully aware of opinions and assessments voiced at the university level. What is of importance is that the system is not rigid and inflexible, and that is why East German higher education will probably continue, within the terms of reference appointed by the state and ambitiously groping beyond them, to be a success and something of a showpiece of the GDR.

INSTITUTION FOR SOCIAL AND POLICY STUDIES

The mission of the Institution for Social and Policy Studies (ISPS) is to encourage and undertake multidisciplinary research and education. The ISPS is oriented to the exploration of social problems rather than to the refinement of discipline-based methodology. In recent years, ISPS research has focused on the problems of the city, education, health service delivery, and on the modeling of social systems. Currently, research is also being developed on criminal justice, governmental reform, environment, income distribution, aging, the policy-making process, and value problems in public policy. ISPS is not a consulting organization but an instrument for enriching the social sciences and related disciplines in the University.

Institution for Social and Policy Studies
16A Yale Station (111 Prospect Street)
New Haven, Connecticut 06520